NPS Form 10-900 (Rev. 8-96) VLR - 2/21/89 NRHP- 11/2/89 United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

, ,,			
1. Name of Property	· · · · ·		
historic name	The Farm		
other names/site number	157-21		
2. Location			
street & number	U.S. Route 220	N/A	not for publication
city, town	Rocky Mount	71/ 72	vicinity
state Virginia	code VA county Frank		zip code ₂₄₁₅₁
VILGIRIA	Joseph A Joseph Milank	1111	24151
3. Classification		-	
Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resource	s within Property
X private	X building(s)		oncontributing
	district	Contributing	~
public-local			buildings
public-State	site		sites
public-Federal	structure	_0	<u>0</u> structures
	object	_0	_0objects
		_3	Total
Name of related multiple prop	perty listing: N/A	Number of contributi	ng resources previously
		listed in the National	Register
	-		
4. State/Federal Agency	Certification		
Signature of certifying official	5 111		Date
Director, VA Depar	etment of Historic Resources		
State or Federal agency and	bureau		
In my opinion, the propert	y meets does not meet the Nationa	l Register criteria See conti	nuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or o	other official		Date
State or Federal agency and	bureau		
5. National Park Service	Certification		
, hereby, certify that this pro		-	
•			
entered in the National Re	egister.		
See continuation sheet.			
determined eligible for the			
Register. 🔲 See continuat	ion sheet.		
determined not eligible fo	r the		
National Register.			
removed from the Nationa	al Register.		
other, (explain:)			
	Signatur	re of the Keeper	Date of Action

6. Function or Use		
Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)	Current Funct	tions (enter categories from instructions)
DOMESTIC: single dwelling	DOMEST	IC: single dwelling
DOMESTIC: secondary structure		IC: secondary structure
7. Description		
Architectural Classification	Materials (ent	er categories from instructions)
enter categories from instructions)		
enter categories from instructions)	foundation	BRICK
Greek Revival	foundation walls	
(enter categories from instructions) Greek Revival		

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

The Farm is a four-acre estate located on U.S. Route 220 south of the central business district in the town of Rocky Mount. Situated on a small knoll surrounded by mature hardwood trees, the residence at The Farm is a two-story frame and weatherboard dwelling that was used as the ironmaster's house for the nearby Washington Iron Works. The house was probably erected during the late eighteenth century, expanded in the 1820s, and heavily remodeled in the Greek Revival style around 1856. A well-preserved example of the Greek Revival style as interpreted by local builders, the house is also interesting as a dwelling that has evolved from the late eighteenth century to the present. Initially a one-story, three-room-plan dwelling, the house was raised to two stories and remodeled as a fashionable single-pile, central-passage-plan house by the mid-nineteenth century. Late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century additions and a modern south addition completed the house's Once the scene of a number of domestic outbuildings, only an evolution. unusual one-story brick slave quarters/summer kitchen to the rear of the The site of a farm office is marked by a stone house still survives. chimney north of the house and a noncontributing log building of unknown age southwest of the house was moved to the site from another farm in the county.

ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS

The rectangular main block of the ironmaster's house at The Farm is a two-story, frame and weatherboard, single-pile, central-passage-plan structure. A two-story mid-nineteenth-century rear ell addition created the house's T-shaped configuration until a modern one-story addition was built to the south. The main block is situated on a Flemish-bond brick foundation, while the rear ell rests on a four-course-American-bond brick foundation. Capped by a standing-seam metal hipped roof, the main block and rear ell feature interior end brick chimneys and are encircled by a plain freizeboard, cove molding, and box cornice. The most dominant feature of the facade is a two-level, triangular-pedimented portico consisting of paired square wood columns with paneled plinths and cornice caps on the first level and plain square columns with simpler caps and a simple balustrade on the second level. A modern stone terrace extends

8. Statement of Significance				
Certifying official has considered the significance of this nationally	property in relat			
Applicable National Register Criteria X A B]c □p			
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)]c]E	□G	
Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)) Per	Period of Significance		Significant Dates 1856
	Cul	ltural Affiliat N/A	ion	
Significant Person N/A	Arc	chitect/Build		

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

a four-acre estate located in the town of Rocky Mount in Franklin County, is significant for its association with Virginia's antebellum charcoal iron industry. The estate includes a two-story, frame, T-shaped, Greek Revival dwelling that was the residence of the the Washington Iron Works. ironmaster of During its period of significance the house also served as an ordinary, the first courthouse of Franklin County, and a farmhouse. It is associated with Peter Saunders, Jr., a locally important merchant, ironmaster, and county justice who lived in the house between about 1820 and 1846. The dwelling is a rare survival of a property type associated with an early, major industry in Virginia during an era when the state was a national leader in iron production. Today The Farm, which also includes an unusual one-story brick slave quarters/summer kitchen, still stands on its hill close by the Washington Iron Works furnace (which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places) and remains a visually prominent reminder of Franklin County's antebellum charcoal iron industry.

JUSTIFICATION OF CRITERIA

The Farm is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C. It is eligible under Criterion A because of its association with Virginia's antebellum charcoal iron industry at a time when the state was a national leader in iron production. In addition, The Farm is one of the few examples remaining in Virginia of an ironmaster's residence. Under Criterion C the house is eligible because it is a well-preserved example of the Greek Revival style and illustrates the evolution of the dwelling's plan from one-and-a-half stories with three rooms to I-house to T-shaped Greek Revival-style residence. This progression in the plan and style of the structure took place throughout the federal and antebellum periods and reflected the changes that occurred in the life-styles and tastes of its owners.

9. Major Bibliographical References	
See continuation sheet	
	X See continuation sheet
Previous documentation on file (NPS):	[X] dee commandi sheet
preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67)	Primary location of additional data:
has been requested	X State historic preservation office
previously listed in the National Register previously determined eligible by the National Register	Other State agency Federal agency
designated a National Historic Landmark	Local government
recorded by Historic American Buildings	University
Survey #	Other
recorded by Historic American Engineering	Specify repository:
Record #	Virginia Division of Historic Landmarks 221 Governor Street, Richmond, VA 23219
10. Geographical Data	221 Governor Street, Alchaond, VA 25219
Acreage of propertyapproximately four acres	
UTM References	
ALI	B
Zone Easting Northing	Zone Easting Northing
C L L L L L L L L L L L L L L L L L L L	
	See continuation sheet
Verbal Boundary Description	
Beginning at a point A located on the west side	e of U.S. Route 220 approximately 170' south
of the southwest corner of the intersection of mately 750' west along the south property line	said road and Lawndale Road; thence approxi-
65' northwest to a point C; thence approximatel	ly 312' north along the rear property line of
The Farm to a point D on the south side of Lawr	ndale Road; thence approximately 840 east to a
point E; thence approximately 170' south to the	e See continuation sheet
point of origin.	
Boundary Justification	he listerial boundaries of The Form as well a
The boundaries of the nominated property are the modern property lines of the property. They is	nclude the farmhouse, outbuildings, and out-
building site that are associated with the pro-	operty.
	See continuation sheet
11. Form Prepared By	
name/title David A. Edwards - Architectural History	
organization Virginia Division of Historic Landmar	<u>ks</u> <u>date <u>February 3, 1989</u> <u>telephone (804) 786-3143</u></u>
street & number 221 Governor Street city or town Eichmond	
The state of the s	v.v.v tri-C-tri

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from the portico to the southeast corner of the house. The house's three-bay facade features a central entrance flanked by sidelights and Doric pilasters and surmounted by a four-light transom with thin muntins. Fenestration consists of paired six-over-six sash windows on the first floor and single six-over-six sash windows flanking the portico on the second floor. A central tripartite window provides access to the second level of the portico. All windows are framed by simple wood trim.

Fragments of the house's original rafter framing at the first-floor level and the remains of beaded weatherboard were uncovered when a modern addition was constructed at the south end of the house. These remnants indicate that the house was originally built as a one- or 1 1/2-story, gable-roofed, frame dwelling covered in beaded weatherboard. built by James Callaway as early as 1784 when he was issued a license to operate an ordinary at the site, the house was later raised to two stories after 1823 when it was purchased by Peter Saunders, Jr. The present brick foundation of the main block gives no indication that the increased in size before the mid-nineteenth century. original house Seams and patchwork in the heart pine flooring of the house also that the original plan appears to have been an unusual single-pile, three-room configuration. Sometime during the early nineteenth century, interior partitions were moved inward to create a central passage with stair and the house became a typical I house of the period.

The most significant changes to the house probably occurred in 1856 when John Ingles Saunders remodeled his residence in the fashionable Greek Revival style; a substantial increase in the value of the property is recorded in the county tax records for that year. In order to simplify the geometric shape of the house and create closets flanking the fireplaces in most of the rooms, Saunders extended the ends of the house, making the original exterior end brick chimneys interior end examples. He also substituted the gable roof for a shallow hipped roof and added a one-story flat-roofed porch on the front (the first level of the present portico). The central entrance was enhanced with sidelights, a transom, and flanking Doric pilasters—all in a typical Greek Revival-style treatment. Fenestration was also replaced with the six-over-six sash windows with simple trim that still survive throughout most of the house. Doubling the size of the house, Saunders also added a two-story rear ell that created a T-shaped plan rather than the L-shaped configuration that was more common for houses of the period. Below the rear ell was a kitchen with a cooking fireplace.

The interior of the house was also extensively remodeled in the Greek Revival style and has been well preserved to the present day. The central passage features a two-flight stair with a heavy turned newel, turned balusters, and a rounded handrail. Interior door trim is fluted

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with bull's-eye cornerblocks, while high baseboard topped with molding encircles the room. A wide entrance into the parlor to the north appears to have once held pocket doors that have either been removed or remain concealed in the walls. An arched opening at the rear of the central passage leads into a stairhall of the rear ell. The trim surrounding the opening, which features pilasters and a keystone, was added in the early 1970s.

Adjoining the central passage to the north is the parlor. The room possesses a gray and white marbleized Greek Revival mantel consisting of broad capped pilasters, a high plain frieze, and a simple shelf. A picture molding dating from the late nineteenth century surrounds the room and door and window trim date from the twentieth century.

The dining room is located opposite the central passage to the south. A handsomely appointed room, it features a simple Greek Revival mantel flanked on either side by a closet with a five-panel door framed in broad architrave trim and topped by a three-light transom. Picture molding extends around the room and twentieth-century trim frames the double windows.

The rear ell of the house was probably constructed around 1856 when the entire dwelling was remodeled. Featuring a lateral stairhall that extends the width of the ell and is perpendicular to the central passage of the original house, the ell also contains a large bedroom on each floor. The stair, five-panel doors, architrave door trim, and plain Greek Revival mantels in these rooms are either similar or the same as the interior woodwork in the original section of the house. Windows in the ell bedrooms are framed in architrave trim with a simple paneled apron below each sill.

The second-floor bedrooms in both sections of the house have simple Greek Revival mantels flanked by unusual closets with five-panel doors, double architrave door and window trim that may predate the mid-nineteenth-century remodeling, and paneled window aprons. Random-width heart pine flooring is found throughout the house.

A porch extending along the south side of the rear ell was later enclosed and modified during the twentieth century. According to the present owners, a small room at the west end of the porch was probably added in the late nineteenth century and was known as the "borning room." Other additions from the period of significance include the second level of the front portico, which was added after 1900, an early-twentieth-century shed-roofed porch at the north end of the rear stairhall, and a square, one-story, flat-roofed sleeping porch that was added in the 1930s at the western end of the rear ell. The first-floor front windows of the house

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were also paired sometime after 1900. The largest addition, however, is the one-story, gable-roofed, frame and weatherboard addition that extends from the south side of the house. Built in 1979, the addition is in keeping with the architectural character of the old house.

A 1 1/2-story, four-course-American-bond brick slave quarters/summer kitchen is located to the rear of the house; its survival is unusual. The two-unit structure possesses a slate gable roof that incorporates a four-bay porch across the front. The front features two six-panel doors that provide access to each unit from the porch, while the structure's only windows are six-over-six sash types seen at the rear. A central brick chimney provides each unit with a fireplace.

An old photograph of the farm taken during the early 1900s shows several frame domestic outbuildings to the rear of the house. Unfortunately, none of these outbuildings survive; however, a single stone chimney northwest of the house marks the site of a farm office that was demolished before the 1970s. Attempting to recreate the cluster of outbuildings to the rear of the house, the present owners recently moved a 1 1/2-story log dwelling from another Franklin County farm to a site southwest of the house. Situated on a stone foundation, the noncontributing building of unknown age features v-notched corners, batten doors, and a large exterior end stone chimney at the north gable end.

The Farm is situated on a small knoll surrounded by catalpa, pecan, and cedar trees. A grassy path on axis with the front entrance is flanked by rows of boxwood, while a long drive leads from the main road (U.S. Route 220) to the house. The Farm and its setting are well preserved and dominate the southern end of the town of Rocky Mount.

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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Before the Civil War, Virginia was one of the leading iron-producing states in the Union, and during the eighteenth century Virginia had exported more iron than all the other British North American colonies combined. Although by 1861 the giant Tredegar Iron Works, in Richmond, had become the symbol of Virginia's iron industry, scores of small charcoal blast furnaces and forges tucked among the hills and streams of western Virginia were a continuing source of iron products as they had been for decades. The Washington Iron Works, in Franklin County, was some ways typical of those antebellum ironworks that operated to the east of the Blue Ridge. Free of the confining hills of Appalachia, Tidewater and Piedmont ironworks often were composed of sprawling tracts of farm- and timberland and were known as "iron plantations." Slaves and white artisans mined and refined the ore, cut wood and made charcoal, worked on the casting floor and in the forge, tended the crops and livestock, and filled orders for iron ware. All of this activity was overseen by the ironmaster, who lived near the works in a large, imposing house and directed the operation of his industrial plantation much as his agricultural counterparts in the tobacco and cotton regions of the South directed theirs.

The Washington Iron Works evolved from a small backcountry bloomery forge to an iron plantation of major importance to the local economy. A small industrial village grew in what had been wilderness, and the residence of the ironmaster likewise expanded and changed over the years. The forge, warehouses, office, barns, stables, icehouse, slave cabins, and other structures have disappeared over the years. Today only the furnace, a slave quarters/kitchen, and the ironmaster's house remain to symbolize the industry that once thrived in Franklin County.

Iron ore was discovered in present-day Franklin County before 1753 when Pennsylvania native John Wilcox filed a claim for 400 acres of land "on Iron Mine Branch of Pigg River." Wilcox was but one in a long line of explorers and entrepreneurs who sought to exploit Virginia's mineral resources. The first settlers at Jamestown had constructed by 1622 the first ironworks in America on Falling Creek in present-day Chesterfield County; on 22 March 1622 the works and many settlers were destroyed in a surprise attack by Indians led by Opechancanough. It was not until about 1716, almost a century later, that the first successful ironworks was established in Virginia by Governor Alexander Spotswood. By 1755, two years after John Wilcox moved into the Franklin County area, there were five Virginia ironworks in production—all of them in the Northern Neck.

During the next decade, however, the locus of iron manufacturing shifted to the Valley of Virginia as Pennsylvanians moved down the Great Wagon

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Road into the valley and beyond in the 1750s and 1760s. Iron manufacturing came to the northern Piedmont of Virginia when a company of Baltimore and Pennsylvania investors erected three furnaces in Albemarle County in the 1770s.

The Piedmont land to the south of the James River, meanwhile, remained sparsely settled until the two decades prior to the Revolution, and the early ironworks built there were smaller in scale than their counterparts in the rest of the colony. The first such frontier ironworks in the Southside Piedmont was the Oxford Forge, in Bedford County, which was begun perhaps as early as 1768, and by 1776 in the possession of David Ross, a Petersburg merchant and probably the wealthiest man in Virginia. The second ironworks in the region—what eventually became the Washington Iron Works—was established in 1773 by John Donelson, a Maryland native who quickly rose to prominence in frontier society and served as a vestryman, surveyor, justice, and militia colonel. He also was the father of Rachel Donelson, who became the wife of Andrew Jackson.

Donelson obtained the rights to John Wilcox's ore-bearing land in what may have been a fraudulent transaction. What Donelson then built on the property was called a bloomery forge, which employed a relatively unsophisticated method of refining relatively small amounts of iron from ore. In 1773, which probably was the first year of the bloomery's operation, Donelson employed four white men and six slaves at the ironworks; some of the workers produced iron while others mined and carted ore, made charcoal, and raised crops. In addition to the bloomery and forge, Donelson's ironworks probably had storage sheds for charcoal and iron ore, a small warehouse for bar iron, and dwellings for the workers. A small industrial village stood where there had been only wilderness the year before.

As the Franklin County area became more thickly settled, the demand for ironware increased beyond the capacity of the bloomery to satisfy it. What was needed was a larger, more technically advanced medium for manufacturing iron: a blast furnace. Such a furnace could produce many times the quantity of iron made by a bloomery and do it more efficiently. But it also required a capital investment beyond Donelson's capabilities. By 1778 Donelson apparently had leased his bloomery to James Callaway and Jeremiah Early, of Bedford County, and the next year he sold it to them. Callaway and Early, both wealthy men, invested heavily to modernize the ironworks. They named their enterprise the Washington Iron Works after their fellow Virginian and commander of the American army.

Jeremiah Early died in the summer of 1779 and his sons inherited his share of the partnership. James Callaway soon purchased a majority

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United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

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interest, however, and remained the dominant partner until his death in He never lived at the ironworks; the sons of Jeremiah Early lived there instead and served in turn as ironmaster. No doubt there was a collection of buildings used in manufacture and storage, as well as for residences. That one of the structures was occupied by James Callaway when he visited the ironworks is evidenced by the act that was passed in 1785 to create the county of Franklin: it directed the first county court to meet "at the house of James Callaway, at his iron works in the said county" on the first Monday in January 1786. The house may have been constructed by 1784, when the local court (then Henry County) granted Callaway a license "to keep ordinary at his Tenement, near his and Early's Iron Works." The architectural evidence offered by The Farm indicates that the current building began as a three-room, story-and-ahalf structure in the late eighteenth century; it most likely was this building that served successively as an occasional residence, ordinary, and a courthouse. According to local tradition the first court in the northeast room to the right of the central hall on the first floor of The Farm. By April 1786 a log courthouse had been built on the site of the current county seat and Callaway's house had resumed its earlier functions.

After Callaway died, the heirs of Callaway and Early operated the ironworks until they sold their shares between 1817 and 1823 to three brothers, Fleming, Samuel, and Peter Saunders. They were the sons of Peter Saunders, Sr., one of the founding justices of Franklin County who first had met at Callaway's house on 2 January 1786. Fleming Saunders, a lawyer who became a judge of the General Court and of the Superior Court of Law, and Samuel Saunders, who acquired huge landholdings in Franklin County, left the management of the ironworks to Peter Saunders, Jr., their elder brother. It was between 1817 and 1823, most likely, that Peter Saunders added the second floor to the front section of The Farm, giving it an I-house plan.

Saunders lived in the house with his illegitimate daughter, Jane Jones Saunders, until 1846, when he sold the property to his brothers and moved to Pittsylvania County, where he died on 25 May 1847. The intervening years had not been ones of uniform prosperity for the ironworks. Beginning in the late 1830s with the Panic of 1837 and the financial crises that followed, the southern iron industry entered a depression from which it never fully recovered. Only some crafty financial maneuvers--"selling" all the slaves to two nephews who then paid the taxes on them for instance--enabled Peter Saunders to remain solvent.

Despite his difficulties, however, Saunders presided over the "iron plantation" when it was at its height. Large numbers of slaves mined ore, made charcoal, operated the furnace and forge, grew crops, and

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tended the livestock. The center of this industrial and farming complex was The Farm and its outbuildings. Besides the brick, two-room slave quarters/kitchen, which still stands, there were frame barns, slave cabins, a dairy, an icehouse, an office, and a carriage house, all of which long since have been demolished.

The Farm and its outbuildings were well suited not only to the needs of the iron plantation as an industrial and farming complex, but to the status of Peter Saunders, Jr., as well. From the hill on which the house stands, Saunders could see not only the ironworks but the town of Rocky Mount; likewise the townspeople were aware of the big white house on the hill that belonged to the man who operated the county's major industry. Saunders and his extended family dominated local politics as well. He himself served his county variously as a militia officer, a postmaster, a justice, and a sheriff. His brothers, cousins, and nephews occupied several other county offices.

His nephew Peter Saunders, a son of his brother Samuel Saunders, took over the ironmaster's duties at the Washington Iron Works after he retired. But the younger man's interests lay elsewhere, and the old ironworks scarcely made enough money to warrant his full attention. The low price of iron and competition from more efficient, coke-fueled northern furnaces spelled the doom of the small charcoal ironworks that the Washington typified. That doom was further sealed by two other factors: the weather and the Civil War. In September 1851 a sudden storm resulted in the collapse of the dam upstream from the furnace; a wall of water struck the furnace while it was in blast, cracking the interior and washing away the bellows. A decade later, during the Civil War, some iron was again produced there, but only briefly. For all practical purposes the life of the Washington Iron Works had ended.

The life of The Farm, however, continued. In 1852 Samuel Saunders died and his property was divided among his heirs. John Ingles Saunders, one of his sons, received The Farm and 522 acres in 1853. In 1856 he remodeled the house in the Greek Revival style and added a two-story wing to the rear, making it T-shaped. It probably was at this time that the first floor of the currently two-story porch was built on the front of the house. The second level of the porch was added after the turn of the century. The property remained in the hands of the descendants of John I. Saunders until 1971, when it was sold to the present owners.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

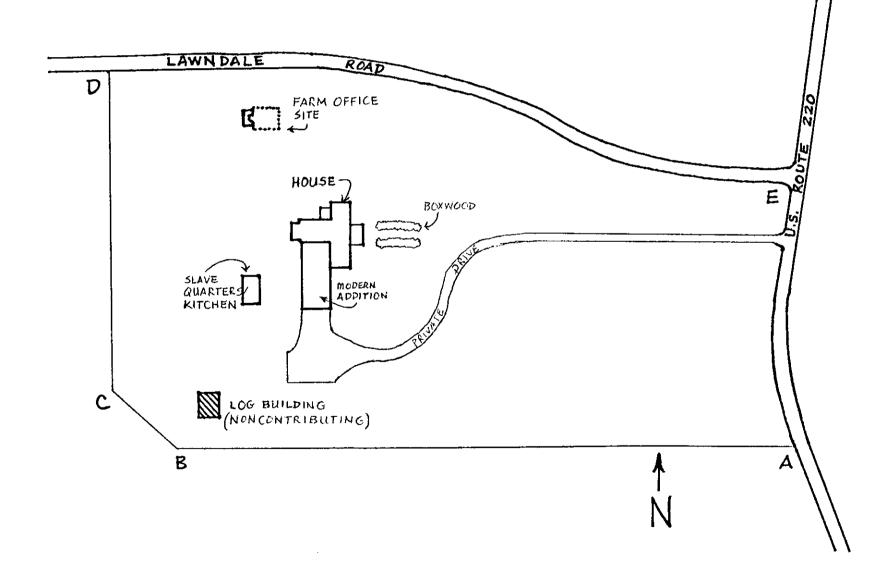
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THE FARM

SKETCH MAP - NOT TO SCALE



ROCKY MOUNT

